

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 03266 01 OF 02 050811Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03 EUR-12 IO-13 ACDA-07 OMB-01
TRSE-00 MCT-01 AID-05 /108 W
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R 050505Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8218
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 JIDDA 3266

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, US, XF
SUBJECT: SOME UNORTHODOX COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO THE
UNITED STATES POSTURE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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1. FOR THE PAST THIRTY YEARS WE HAVE WATCHED OR JOINED WAVE AFTER
WAVE OF WELL-MEANING AMERICANS PRODUCED BY SUCCESSIVE ADMIN-
ISTRATIONS WHICH FULLY INTENDED TO "SETTLE" FIRST THE PALESTINE
PROBLEM AND, LATER, ITS HORRID MUTATION, THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM.
OBVIOUSLY, NONE SUCCEEDED THOUGH SUCH IS THE POWER OF THE MEDIA
THAT TWO NOBEL PRIZES WERE AWARDED TO "NEGOTIATORS" WHO NEVER
EVEN GOT NEAR THE ESSENCE OF THE DIFFICULTY.

2. IT IS A DEMONSTRABLE FACT, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT DR. KISSINGER ACHIEVED AFTER THE 1973 WAR RESULTS QUITE SIMILAR TO THOSE HIS PREDECESSORS HAD BROUGHT ABOUT AFTER THE EARLIER WARS: "STANDSTILL ARRANGEMENTS" CONVENIENT TO THE ANTAGONISTS, ADORNED WITH LUCRATIVE INDUCEMENTS DESIGNED TO ASSUAGE THEIR PAIN AND MEET THEIR DIRE NEED. THE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIS "STANDSTILL" AND THOSE OF HIS PREDECESSORS LAY IN THE BURDEN PLACED ON THE U.S. TAXPAYER; THE FANTASTIC POLITICAL CONCESSIONS THE PROFESSOR MADE; AND HIS COMMITMENT OF AMERICAN BODIES TO A GOD-FORSAKEN PLACE CALLED THE SINAI WHERE THEY STAND LIKE TETHERED GOATS AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF TIGERS FROM NORTH AND SOUTH.

3. WHEN MR. TRUMAN CREATED THE PROBLEM, HE SURELY COULD NOT HAVE FORESEEN THAT IT WOULD DEVELOP INTO THE GREATEST FAILURE OF AMERICAN POLICY THE NATION HAS EVER EXPERIENCED, VIET-NAM NOTWITHSTANDING; EVEN NOW, THE WORST IS PROBABLY YET TO COME. AS TO MR. TRUMAN'S SUCCESSORS, THEY HAVE COMPOUNDED HIS ORIGINAL ERROR THUS:

1. UP TO THE PRESENT TIME, AND ESPECIALLY SINCE 1967, THEY HAVE FAILED TO GRASP THAT THE ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN LEADERS GRIPPED AS THEY ARE BY MASADA AND JEHAD COMPLEXES, CANNOT AND DO NOT INTEND TO OFFER AND NEGOTIATE USEFUL CONCESSIONS WITH EACH OTHER.
 2. THE SECOND AND RELATED ERROR HAS BEEN THE CONTINUING FAILURE, OR REFUSAL, OF THE U.S. ADMINISTRATIONS AND THEIR NEGOTIATORS TO FACE THE FACT THAT THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM MUST BE FOUND PRIMARILY IN THE COORDINATED ACTION OF NATIONS OUTSIDE THE
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MIDDLE EAST; INCLUDING A FIRM AND JUST U.S. CONTRIBUTION EMANATING FROM PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE. FOR US TO DECLARE THAT WE ARE NOT ATTEMPTING TO IMPOSE A SOLUTION IS CORRECT, BUT IT IS ALSO DISINGENUOUS BECAUSE WE CANNOT IMPOSE ONE. INSTEAD OF REPEATING OUR REFUSAL TO "IMPOSE", WE SHOULD SHIFT OUR GROUND AND SUGGEST THAT WE WILL ENDEAVOR TO PERSUADE, OR USE OUR INFLUENCE IN THE MATTER. EUPHEMISMS HAVE THEIR USES. ALSO, OUR "ACCEPTABILITY" TO BOTH SIDES IN THE CONFLICT IS MERE FIGMENT, NOT FACT. THE PLAIN TRUTH, OF COURSE, IS THAT WE NEED HELP, A WHOLE LOT OF HELP.

4. PRIOR TO THE 1967 WAR, THE PALESTINIANS HAD NO REAL BASIS FOR HOPE. PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE HAD BEEN PRE-EMPTED BY THEIR OPPONENTS, AND WHILE THE NEIGHBORING ARAB STATES SOBBED AND SIGHED, THEY HAD NOT BEEN DAMAGED SUFFICIENTLY TO MAKE THEIR DEMAGOGUES DANGEROUS. BUT THAT SITUATION CHANGED RADICALLY IN

1967 WHEN THE ISRAELIS MADE A CARDINAL ERROR: THEY TOOK OVER AND HAVE SINCE HELD LARGE TRACTS OF EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN LANDS, AS WELL AS PALESTINIAN TERRITORY ADMINISTERED BY JORDAN. FROM THAT TIME, THE PALESTINIANS HAVE NOT BEEN ALONE: THEY ACQUIRED A CENTRAL POSITION POLITICALLY AMONG THE CONFRONTATION STATES, THE OUTRIGHT SUPPORT OF ALL ARAB STATES, PLUS THAT OF THE ISLAMIC AND THIRD WORLD, AND THE COMMUNIST WORLD. THEY THUS ACQUIRED THE MEANS FOR NEUTRALIZING, OR OVERWHELMING, THE EFFECT OF ISRAELI SUPPORT IN THE UNITED STATES. THE UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLY HALL, AND RECOURSE TO WAR ITSELF, WOULD PROVIDE THE FUTURE BATTLE-GROUNDS.

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R 050505Z MAY 77
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AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMBEMBASSY TUNIS 603

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 JIDDA 3266

5. NO ARAB STATE COULD HENCEFORTH THINK OF MAKING PEACE WITH ISRAEL IN THE ABSENCE OF A SETTLEMENT ACCEPTABLE TO THE PLO/ PALESTINIANS, WHOSE AUTHORITY, CONFIRMED AT RABAT BY ALL THE ARABS, REMAINS UNCHANGED BY THEIR INTERNECINE QUARRELS.

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6. AGAINST THAT BACKDROP, I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT YOU CAN INDUCE ARAB LEADERS TO ORDER DELEGATIONS TO A CONFERENCE WITHOUT AN ARRANGEMENT THE PLO CONSIDERS SATISFACTORY. AS RADIO MOSCOW REMINDS THE ARABS NIGHTLY, THAT MEANS A PLO PRESENCE "FROM THE VERY START AND WITH STATUS EQUAL TO THAT OF ALL OTHER PARTIES." CONSIDER HOW COMFORTABLE IS THE SITUATION OF THE SOVIETS IN THIS MIDDLE EASTERN BEAR PIT. THEY HAVE PRE-EMPTED THE POSITION OF FRIEND OF ALL THE ARAB PARTICIPANTS, BY ADOPTING THE ARAB VIEW ON THE CORE ISSUES. WE SHALL PAY FOR THAT ONE DAY, MY FRIENDS, AS WE DID IN ALGERIA AND SYRIA AND IRAQ. PLEASE NOTE THAT LESS THAN A WEEK AFTER KHADDAM SAT IN THE WHITE HOUSE, HIS CHIEF FELT IT NECESSARY TO ANNOUNCE PUBLICLY THAT A LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARD SETTLEMENT WILL ONCE AGAIN LEAD TO WAR. AND HE MEANS IT. SUCH IS THE MEASURE OF THEIR DOUBTS, SUCH IS THE MEASURE OF THEIR PESSIMISM.

7. IF WE KEEP IN MIND THAT WE ARE MERELY TRYING TO ARRANGE THE SHAPE OF THE TABLE, THE CONCEPT OF A CONFERENCE BECOMES EXTREMELY DEPRESSING. BETWEEN NOW AND SUCH EVENT, THE WORLD IS WAITING TO HEAR HOW THE UNITED STATES WILL ANSWER A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS: WILL THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND THE PLO MUTUALLY ACKNOWLEDGE EACH OTHER'S EXISTENCE AND PERMIT A CONFERENCE TO BEGIN? WHEN WILL THE UNITED STATES ACT LIKE A MEDIATOR AND LESS LIKE A PARTISAN, AND DEAL WITH ALL PARTIES EVENHANDEDLY? HOW LONG ARE WE PREPARED TO DAMAGE MODERATE ARAB GOVERNMENTS BY PERMITTING THE SOVIETS TO PREEMPT THE ROLE OF PROTECTOR OF THEIR CAUSE?
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